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**RECEIVED**  
AUG 21 2000  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program

08/16/00

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director  
Cal-Fed Bay Delta Program  
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Final Programmatic EIR/EIS

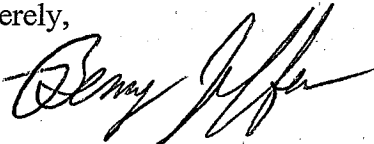
Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I am writing to you today as a concerned farmer and Past President of the Monterey County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. I am extremely concerned about how the Cal-Fed programs will impact the environment of our state's farms and ranches. The agricultural industry is the number one economic engine in our county and in our state, and we are a vital part of the environment of California. The proposed conversion of over a quarter million acres of farmland into habitat and other uses, without an analysis of the impacts of that type of land conversion is unconscionable! Your Cal-Fed program must seek ways to avoid this type of whole scale removal of California farmland from production!

As a fifth generation California farmer myself, the Cal-Fed proposal is not only logistically unrealistic, but blatantly offensive to my family, who have a long history of being active participants in our strong agricultural economy. Farmers and ranchers in our state are the premier stewards of our land, as it is our heritage and our legacy to the future. Without the positive contribution of our state's farmers and ranchers the entire state and its citizens will suffer an irrevocable loss. California agriculture needs a stable and affordable supply of water to maintain and increase our efficiency and productivity; but we must all work together to develop new water storage capacity within the state to deal with our long-range needs. Your plan as proposed would take away precious water from our state's farmers and ranchers in drought years, which would negatively impact not only agriculture, but also the habitat and the state's economy as well as that of the global consumers our agriculture also serves.

Cal-Fed needs to hold more public hearings to explain it's proposals, before they become final, and in these meetings explain to every citizen in the state how your plans will affect the people. As productive agricultural business representatives of California, we demand an opportunity to adequately review and comment on your proposals!

Sincerely,



Benny Jefferson